

SECTION TWO

Reports of Bodies at the Roswell AAF Hospital

This section examines the remaining portion of the Roswell Incident claims—the reports of “bodies” at the Roswell AAF hospital. Examinations of the various “crashed saucer” scenarios revealed references to the Roswell AAF hospital appeared in virtually all of them. Most of these were based on the account of one individual, W. Glenn Dennis. His undocumented and uncorroborated recollections, reportedly first related in 1989, over 42 years after the alleged Roswell Incident, are based on activities he allegedly encountered as a mortician providing contract services to the Roswell AAF hospital. Dennis’ recollections have, in turn, been interpreted by UFO theorists as evidence that the U.S. Army Air Forces recovered “alien” bodies and autopsied them at the Roswell AAF hospital in July 1947.

Dennis has been described as the “star witness” and his claims as the most credible of the Roswell Incident.¹ This, even though his most sensational assertions were not based on his own experiences but on information allegedly related to him by unidentified mystery witnesses.



Fig. 1. The International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, N.M.

The mystery witnesses were allegedly an Army Air Forces nurse and a pediatrician both assigned to the Roswell AAF hospital in 1947.² To casual observers, this account, which contains references to actual U.S. Army Air Forces and U.S. Air Force personnel and activities, appears to have a ring of authenticity. However, when examined closely by Air Force researchers, the dates of events, the events themselves, and the people described as having participated in them, were found to be grossly inaccurate and totally unrelated to activities of July 1947.

The Account

The following is a summary of information provided by W. Glenn Dennis, who claimed he was a 22-year-old mortician at the Ballard Funeral Home in Roswell in July 1947, when he alleged these events occurred.*

On July 7, 1947, Dennis alleged he received a series of phone calls at the Ballard Funeral Home, where he worked, from the Mortuary Affairs officer at Roswell Army Air Field. He recalled that the mortuary officer inquired as to the availability of child sized caskets and procedures for preserving bodies that had been "laying out in the elements."³ Later that day he received an emergency ambulance call (the civilian mortuary for which he worked also provided an ambulance service) to respond to the site of a minor traffic accident in Roswell.⁴ The accident victim was an "airman" stationed at Roswell AAF, and Dennis transported the airman to the hospital at the base.⁵

As Dennis walked into the hospital he noticed three military box-type ambulances, one or more of which contained what appeared to be "wreckage."⁶ He described the wreckage as being inscribed with odd markings or symbols and bluish-purplish in color.⁷ He recalled that some of this wreckage was resting against the inside wall of the rear compartment of the ambulance and two pieces of it "looked kind of like the bottom of a canoe."⁸ He described other wreckage on the floor of the ambulance as being "all sharp" and as best he could tell "was like broken glass."⁹ He also recalled observing Military Policemen (MPs) standing at the back of two of these ambulances.¹⁰

When he went inside the hospital, he encountered a military nurse who was assigned there and with whom he was previously acquainted.¹¹ The nurse, who looked upset, was covering her mouth with a cloth and told him that "you're going to get in a lot of trouble" and that he should "just get out of here."¹² Dennis also stated that he encountered a military doctor who was assigned to the hospital, a pediatrician, with whom he was "pretty good friends" but did not speak with at that time.¹³

* Excerpts of interviews contained in this summary were taken from audio or video recordings made by persons referenced in the appropriate endnote. The sole exception is the interview conducted by Stanton T. Friedman on August 5, 1989. Quotations from this interview were taken from a transcript which is reportedly an accurate representation of the interview. Friedman has not honored repeated requests for an audio recording.

Having seen the wreckage in the rear of the ambulance and believing there had been an accident, he asked another officer in the hospital if there had been a plane crash. The officer, whom Dennis had never seen before, asked him: "Who in the hell are you?" When he responded he was "from the funeral home," the officer summoned two MPs to escort him from the hospital.¹⁴

However, before Dennis and the two MPs had left the hospital, he heard someone say, "We're not through with that SOB, bring him back here."¹⁵ When Dennis turned around, he observed a redheaded captain (in one version of these events Dennis is quoted as describing this person as a "big redheaded colonel"¹⁶) who said, "You did not see anything. There was no crash here. You don't go into town making any rumors that you saw anything or that there was any crash... you could get in a lot of trouble."¹⁷

Angry about being called an SOB, Dennis informed the redheaded officer that he was a civilian, not under his authority, and that he, the redheaded officer, "can't do a damn thing to me."¹⁸ The redheaded officer was alleged to have threatened Dennis by responding "Oh yes we can"... "Somebody will be picking your bones out of the sand"... "We can do anything to you..." That we want to."¹⁹ A black sergeant, whom Dennis recalled had accompanied the redheaded officer, allegedly stated he would "make real good dog food."²⁰ Following this exchange, Dennis claimed he was "picked up...arm and arm" and escorted back to his place of business by two MPs.²¹

The following day, July 8, 1947, Dennis attempted to telephone the nurse he had seen in the hall at the hospital to find out "what was going on."²² He stated that he was unable to reach the nurse but did reach another nurse, a "Captain Wilson," who explained to him that the nurse he was trying to contact was not on duty, but "Wilson" would give her a message to call him.²³ The nurse called Dennis later that same day at the funeral home where he worked and agreed to meet with him at the officers' club at Roswell AAF that afternoon.²⁴

When the two met, the nurse appeared disturbed and ill.²⁵ Dennis asked her to explain what was going on when they met in the hospital the day before. The nurse explained that, in the course of her normal duties, she entered an examining room to get some supplies and encountered two doctors whom she did not recognize that "supposedly were doing a preliminary autopsy" on "three," "very mangled," "black," "little bodies."²⁶ The doctors requested the nurse remain in the room because they needed her assistance.²⁷ She allegedly explained that there was a terrible odor in the room that made both her and the doctors ill.²⁸ Due to this terrible odor and inadequate ventilation, the nurse allegedly told Dennis that the autopsies were moved to another facility on the base and then "everything" was taken to "Wright Field" (now Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio).²⁹

The nurse described the little bodies in detail and even provided a diagram.³⁰ She described "little bodies" three to four feet in length that had large, "flexible," heads, and concave eyes and noses.³¹

After this meeting Dennis claimed he never saw the nurse again, and he was told she had been shipped out the same afternoon (July 8, 1947) or the next day (July 9, 1947).³² However, some time later Dennis received a letter from the nurse that indicated she was in London, England.³³ Dennis stated that he tried to respond to the nurse, but his letter was returned stamped “return to sender” and “deceased.”³⁴ After receiving this letter, he inquired at the base about the nurse and was told by “Captain Wilson” that she didn’t know where the nurse was, but there was a rumor that she and several other nurses had been killed in a plane crash while on a training mission.³⁵

Some years later, Dennis stated that he visited the unidentified military pediatrician he had seen at the hospital.³⁶ The pediatrician had since left the military and set up practice in Farmington, N.M.³⁷ Dennis said he and the pediatrician discussed the incident of years past but was stopped short when the pediatrician told him that he was consulted regarding this incident, but that “it was completely out of [his] field of medicine,” then ended the discussion.³⁸

Based on this account, UFO theorists have presented the following assertions:

a. Dennis, the “missing” nurse, and the unidentified pediatrician inadvertently stumbled onto the highly classified autopsies of alien bodies at Roswell AAF hospital in July 1947.

b. The two mysterious doctors at the hospital were sent to Roswell AAF from a higher headquarters to conduct the autopsies after which the bodies were transported to what is now Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

c. The bluish-purplish wreckage that looked like the bottom of a canoe in the rear of the ambulance, were “escape pods” from a flying saucer flown by the aliens that crashed in the Roswell area.

d. Dennis was forcibly removed from the hospital and threatened with death by the redheaded officer because he had witnessed some of these activities.

e. The nurse was kidnapped, possibly murdered, and all records that she ever existed were systematically destroyed by government agents, also because she witnessed these activities.

As in other accounts examined in this report, the episodes described here became part of the Roswell Incident only because the witness claimed they occurred at a very specific time, July 7-9, 1947. These dates coincide with an actual event: the retrieval of experimental Project MOGUL research equipment that was erroneously reported as a flying disc (see Section One).³⁹ If the events described here occurred at any other time—years, months, weeks, or even days before or after July 7-9, 1947—they might be considered unusual to an uninformed person, but certainly not part of the Roswell Incident.

Air Force research revealed that the witness made serious errors in his recollections of events. When his account was compared with official records of the actual events he is believed to have described, extensive inaccuracies were indicated including a likely error in the date by as much as 12 years.

2.1

The “Missing” Nurse and the Pediatrician

To illustrate the errors in this account and to identify actual events, the following section will examine the accounts of the missing nurse and the unidentified pediatrician. Both of these persons were allegedly present at the Roswell AAF hospital when the events described by the witness occurred.

The “Missing” Nurse

Dennis recalled that the nurse was quickly and suspiciously shipped out either the same day or the day after he met with her in the Roswell AAF Officers’ Club. If this allegation was true, it certainly seemed unusual—and verifiable. Therefore, the morning reports, the certified daily personnel accounting records required to be kept by all Army Air Forces units at that time, were obtained and reviewed. These reports did not indicate that a nurse or any other person was reassigned on the days alleged, July 8 or July 9, 1947.⁴⁰ The morning reports of the 427th Army Air Forces Base Unit (AAFBU) Squadron “M,” the unit that all the medical personnel at Roswell AAF were assigned in July 1947, did not indicate a sudden or overseas transfer of a nurse or any other person. Records indicated that one nurse was reassigned on July 23, 1947, over two weeks after the purported events described by Dennis.⁴¹ That nurse was transferred by normal personnel rotation procedures to Ft. Worth AAF (now Carswell AFB), Texas, where she remained on active duty until March 1949.⁴² In fact, the Squadron “M” morning reports revealed the strength of the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) at Roswell AAF for July 1947 was only five nurses. Of these five nurses none were transferred overseas or killed in a plane crash—the “rumored” fate of the missing nurse.⁴³

This review of the hospital morning reports also indicated that the name of the missing nurse provided by the witness was inaccurate. The witness stated in several interviews that he believed the nurse’s name was Naomi Maria Selff.⁴⁴ A comprehensive search of morning reports and rosters from the Roswell AAF Station Hospital indicated that no person by this name, or a similar name, had ever served there. This finding was supported by a search of personnel records at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Mo., a part of the National Archives and Record Administration. NPRC is the depository for all U.S. military personnel records. The search at NPRC also did not find a record that a person named Naomi Maria Selff had ever served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

These findings were consistent with previous efforts of several pro-UFO researchers who have also attempted to locate this nurse or

members of her family. They, likewise, were also unable to confirm her existence.⁴⁵ While some UFO theorists continue to allege that this absence of records regarding a nurse by this name is part of a conspiracy to withhold information, the most likely reason for the lack of records is that this name is inaccurate.*

Even though the name of the nurse is incorrect, it appears that a nurse assigned to the Roswell AAF Station Hospital in 1947 may have been the basis for the claims. Eileen Mae Fanton was the only nurse of the five assigned to Roswell AAF in July 1947, whose personal circumstances and physical attributes not only resembled those of the missing nurse, but appeared to be nearly an exact match.



The “Missing Nurse?”



1st Lt. Eileen M. Fanton was assigned to the Roswell Army Air Field Station Hospital from December 26, 1946 until September 4, 1947.⁴⁶ Fanton, who is deceased, was retired from the U.S. Air Force at the rank of Captain on April 30, 1955, for a physical disability.⁴⁷

In this account, the missing nurse is described as single, “real cute, like a small Audrey Hepburn, with short black hair, dark eyes and olive skin.”⁴⁸ Lieutenant Fanton was single in 1947, 5’1” tall, weighed 100 pounds, had black hair, dark eyes, and was of Italian descent.⁴⁹

Dennis also stated that the nurse was of the Catholic faith, and had been “strictly raised” according to Catholic beliefs.⁵⁰ Fanton’s personnel record listed her as Roman Catholic, a graduate of St. Catherine’s Academy in Springfield, Ky. and as having received her nursing certification from St. Mary Elizabeth’s Hospital in Louisville, Ky.⁵¹

The witness also recalled that the “missing nurse” was a lieutenant, was a general nurse at the hospital, and had sent him correspondence at a later date which stated she was in London, England with a New York, N.Y. APO number (military overseas mailing address) as the return address.⁵² Records revealed that Fanton was a First Lieutenant (promoted from Second Lieutenant to First Lieutenant in June 1947), and she was classified as a “nurse, general duty.”⁵³ Records also indicated that of the five nurses assigned to the Roswell AAF Station Hospital in July 1947, she was the only one that later served a tour of duty in England. Furthermore, she was assigned to the 7510th USAF Hospital, APO 240, New York, N.Y., where she served from June 1952 until April 1955.⁵⁴

Fig. 2. Eileen M. Fanton
(U.S. Air Force photo)

* Interestingly, an article published in the Fall 1995 edition of *Omni* magazine, a publication that in the past has published sensational “Roswell” claims, also independently accounted for all five of the nurses and expressed a decidedly skeptical opinion of the account of the “missing nurse.”

The 7510th USAF Hospital was located approximately 45 miles north of London at Wimpole Park, Cambridge, England.

An additional similarity between Fanton and the “missing nurse” is that her personnel record indicated that she quickly departed Roswell AAF and it is probable that the hospital staff would not have provided information concerning her departure. Fanton’s unannounced departure from Roswell AAF, on September 4, 1947 was to be admitted to Brooke General Hospital, Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, for a medical condition.⁵⁵ This condition was first diagnosed in January 1946 and ultimately led to her medical retirement in 1955.⁵⁶ Therefore, if someone other than a family member contacted the Station Hospital at Roswell AAF and inquired about Fanton, as Dennis stated he did, the staff was simply protecting her privacy as a patient. The staff was not participating in a sinister “cover-up” of information as alleged by UFO theorists.



The Pediatrician

In at least two interviews, the witness stated that a pediatrician stationed at the hospital was involved in the events he described.⁵⁷ When asked by an interviewer how he knew the pediatrician was involved, Dennis was quoted as replying, “I know he was involved because I saw him there.”⁵⁸ Dennis is also quoted as saying that he and the pediatrician were “pretty good friends,” and after the pediatrician left the military he [the pediatrician] set up a practice in Farmington, N.M. “I used to go fishing all the time up north and I visited him several times up there and he was involved,” Dennis said. “I don’t remember his name, I think he is still practicing in Farmington.”⁵⁹

A review of personnel files and interviews with former members of the Roswell AAF/Walker AFB hospital staff, revealed that only one physician ever relocated to Farmington, N.M. following his military service. The former Capt. Frank B. Nordstrom served at Walker AFB from June 1951 until June 1953.⁶⁰ Records also revealed that Nordstrom was indeed a pediatrician and while at Walker AFB, served as the Chief of Pediatric Services.⁶¹ When Nordstrom, a resident of the small town of Aztec, N.M., was interviewed for this report, he stated that he did not recall ever meeting Dennis and could not recall any events that supported any of his claims (see signed sworn statement in Appendix B).⁶²

Farmington (population 8,000 in 1954) is located in the primarily rural Four Corners region of New Mexico approximately 300 miles northwest of Roswell. According to Nordstrom, Farmington did not have a pediatrician before his arrival in 1954. From 1954 until approximately 1970, Nordstrom believes he was the only pediatrician in the area. His recollections were confirmed by a local Farmington pharmacist, Charles E. Clouthier.⁶³ Clouthier also served at the Walker AFB hospital, from 1955 to 1957, and following his military service returned to Farmington, his hometown, where he had lived since 1934. Clouthier has been employed by and co-owned a business, Farmington Drug, since 1957. He is familiar with most, if not all, of the doctors who

practice in Farmington and the Four Corners region of New Mexico. Clouthier's confirmation that Nordstrom was the first pediatrician to practice in the Farmington area, was based on both his frequent professional contacts with local physicians and his experiences as a longtime Farmington resident.⁶⁴

Although Nordstrom believed that he was the pediatrician described, he was at a loss to explain how Dennis gained information concerning his military and civilian employment history. In a signed sworn statement, Nordstrom stated that he did not recall ever meeting Dennis and had certainly never been visited by Dennis as he has claimed. One possible source of the information is that from approximately 1958 until approximately 1961 Dennis operated a drugstore in Aztec, N.M., a small town near Farmington where Nordstrom resides (interestingly Aztec is the location of the original "crashed flying saucer" story, see below). However, Nordstrom also did not recall any contact with Dennis in his capacity as a drugstore operator.

Behind the Roswell Incident?

The "Roswell Incident" story is hardly original. In 1948, a work of fiction reportedly appeared in the *Aztec (N.M.) Independent Review* describing the crash of a flying saucer with "little men" near Aztec, N.M. In 1950, Frank Scully, a columnist for the theatrical publication *Variety*, published a book, *Behind the Flying Saucers*, which proclaimed the story to be true.⁶⁵ Based on



Fig. 3. Story by J.P. Cahn, that appeared in the August 1956, *True* magazine.

the Aztec story, *Behind the Flying Saucers* bears many similarities to the Roswell Incident, most notably, descriptions of covert “flying saucer” and “little men” recoveries interspersed with doses of unsubstantiated accusations directed at the U.S. Air Force.⁶⁶

In his book, Scully claimed he had information from two scientists, Silas M. Newton and a mysterious “Dr. Gee,” who he claimed investigated the crash for the government.⁶⁷ In reality, Newton and Gee were con-men who convinced Scully of the story’s authenticity.⁶⁸

Intrigued by the sensational claims made in *Behind the Flying Saucers*, a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, J. P. Cahn, decided to look into the matter. What resulted from Cahn’s research were articles in the September 1952 and August 1956 edition of *True* magazine which determined that the story was as “phony as a headwaiters bow and smile.”⁶⁹

Cahn, with the assistance of a magician, devised a plan to “sting” the two con-men.⁷⁰ To execute the sting, he used sleight of hand switching an “indestructible” metal disk, claimed to be from a flying saucer, with a slug of his own manufacture. After the switch, Cahn submitted the disk to a laboratory for analysis revealing that they were of earthly origin, in particular, a grade of aluminum used to manufacture pots and pans!⁷¹

Even with the exposure of this obvious fraud, the Aztec story is still revered by UFO theorists. Elements of this story occasionally reemerge and are thought to be the catalyst for other crashed flying saucer stories, including the Roswell Incident.

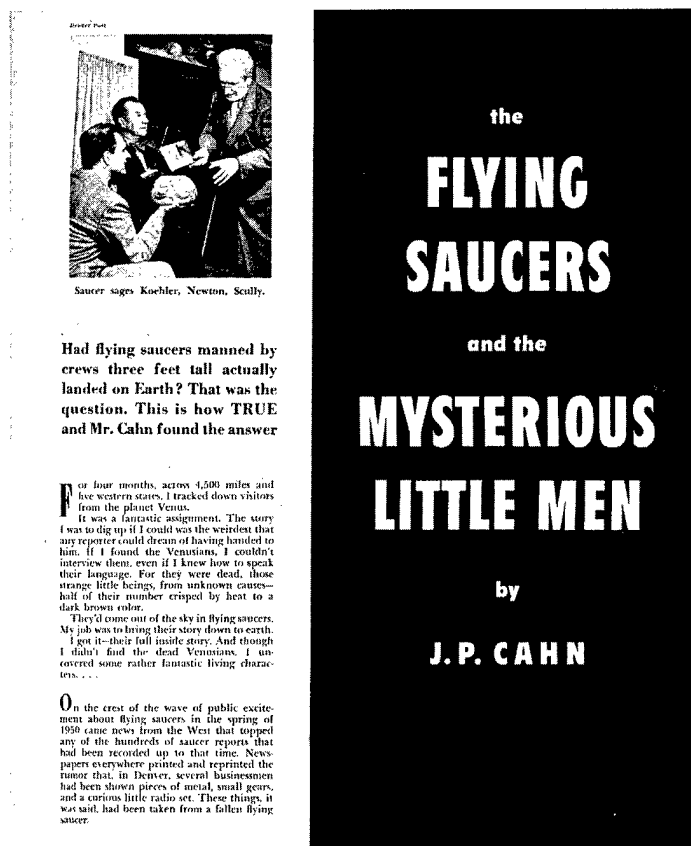


Fig. 4. September 1952 *True* magazine story that exposed the Aztec, N.M. hoax.

Descriptions of Other Air Force Members

Since official records proved that none of the nurses at Roswell AAF in July 1947 were missing, and the nurse and pediatrician described in this account had been identified, major discrepancies between Dennis' recollections and official records were apparent. In an effort to provide for the fullest possible accounting of these claims, even though key aspects had already been proven false, Air Force researchers sought additional information to determine if there was validity to *any* portion of the account. Since the witness has never provided documentation to support his claims, the only source of additional information was the numerous interviews he had previously provided to private researchers and the media. His many statements, which have appeared in newspapers, videos, magazines, movies, books, lectures, journals and television programs, were reviewed for information that might further explain his testimony.

Examination of this large body of publicly available information immediately provided clues that the witness may have recalled incidents from a period other than July 1947. The first clue was that he repeatedly, in all of the interviews, referred to the injured military person he allegedly transported to the Roswell AAF hospital as an airman. The rank of airman was not in existence in 1947. It was implemented on April 1, 1952.⁷² Prior to that date an airman in the Air Force was referred to by the U.S. Army equivalent, a private. Another possible indication that he recalled events from a different time was the description of an alleged "black sergeant" that accompanied the redheaded officer at the hospital. The pairing of a white officer with a black NCO seemed unlikely since in 1947 the U.S. Army Air Forces was racially segregated, as were all branches of the armed forces. The U.S. Air Force did not begin racial integration until the May 11, 1949 issuance of Air Force Letter 35-3 that formally ended segregation.⁷³ Though it was not impossible in 1947 for a black NCO to accompany and seem to be working with a white officer, it would be unlikely. These two discrepancies did not provide a firm time frame of actual events, if any occurred at all.

To approximate a time frame for actual events, the specific details of the information provided were examined. This examination was to determine if any military members were identified by name or by a combination of any other distinguishing characteristics such as rank, position, age, or physical attributes. If the testimony identified a military member as having been present for an event, then their personnel record could be used to affix an approximate date. Affixing a date of an event by referencing personnel records was possible since each military member's personnel file contains a physical description and chronological listing of duty stations, units of assignment, and work assignments for his/her entire military career.

This detailed examination revealed several likely references to specific individuals, which through their personnel files, were documented as having been assigned to the hospital at Roswell AAF or Walker AFB (Roswell AAF was renamed Walker AFB in January 1948).

The “Big Redheaded Colonel.” An indication that Dennis might have mistaken the date of actual events was that he was quoted in at least one book as having said that the officer who threatened him in the hospital was a big redheaded colonel.⁷⁴ Research revealed that only one tall colonel with red hair was known to have been assigned to the Walker AFB hospital. Colonel Lee F. Ferrell was the hospital commander from October 1954 until June 1960.⁷⁵ Ferrell was 6’1” tall and had red hair.⁷⁶



Fig. 5. Col. Lee F. Ferrell (left), was commander of the Walker AFB hospital from 1954-1960. In this photo Ferrell escorts U.S. Senator Dennis Chavez (N.M.) on a tour of the new Walker AFB hospital in June 1960, which was named in honor of the senator. (U.S. Air Force photo)

“Captain ‘Slatts’ Wilson.” In at least two interviews Dennis repeatedly made reference to a nurse named “Captain Wilson.”⁷⁷ He recalled that “Captain Wilson”, who he believed was the head nurse, was another nurse stationed at the Roswell AAF hospital in July 1947.⁷⁸ Dennis claims he spoke to “Captain Wilson” several times in reference to the alleged missing nurse.⁷⁹

He claims that on the day after he met with the missing nurse at the Roswell AAF Officers’ Club, he attempted to contact her by telephone at the hospital but was told that she wasn’t on duty.⁸⁰ Instead, he spoke with “Captain Wilson.” “I called the station I knew she [the missing nurse] always worked at,” Dennis said, “She was a general nurse... I was informed that she wasn’t working that day. [Dennis then telephoned] An old girl by the name of Wilson, Captain Wilson, and I asked her ‘what happened’? She said, ‘Glenn, I don’t know what happened, she’s not on duty.’ She said she’d try to get word to her [the missing nurse] that you [Dennis] want to talk to her.”⁸¹ Later in the same interview Dennis further described Wilson. “We called her ‘Slatts’ Wilson who was a big tall nurse about six foot two or three—big tall skinny gal—and we called her ‘Slatts’—everybody called her ‘Slatts.’ She’s

the one who told me she heard there was a plane crash and the nurses went down on a training mission.”⁸²

The testimony appeared to clearly identify by name, rank, position, physical attributes and by a distinctive nickname, “Slatts,” another nurse present at the hospital in July 1947. But a review of the morning reports of the Roswell AAF hospital for July 1947 did not contain the name of a nurse, or anyone else, named Wilson.⁸³ The only female captain assigned to the Roswell AAF Hospital in July 1947 was the Chief Nurse Capt. Joyce Goddard.⁸⁴ Goddard, who was 5’6” tall, was transferred from Roswell AAF to Korea on August 21, 1947.⁸⁵

Therefore, according to Dennis’ recollection of events, this review of the morning reports indicated that there were two missing nurses, not one—“Lieutenant Naomi Selff” and “Captain ‘Slatts’ Wilson.” Further scrutiny of personnel records of individuals assigned to the Roswell AAF/Walker AFB hospital indicated that Dennis’ recollections of events were apparently inaccurate.

Examination of the August 1947 morning reports did not list a nurse named Wilson, but they *did* list a nurse named Slattery.⁸⁶ Captain Lucille C. Slattery, who retired as a Lieutenant Colonel and is now deceased, was reassigned from Ft. George Wright, Wash. to Roswell AAF on August 7, 1947.⁸⁷



Fig. 6. Lt. Col. Lucille C. Slattery, the only Air Force nurse ever known as “Slatts,” served as a captain at the Roswell AAF/Walker AFB hospital from August 1947 to September 1950. Records indicate that Slattery did not arrive at Roswell AAF until one month *after* the “Roswell Incident,” in direct contradiction to statements made by the sole witness to this account. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Slattery replaced Goddard as the Chief Nurse and was the only female captain assigned to the Roswell AAF hospital. Interviews of persons with longtime professional and personal associations with Slattery, revealed that she was known by the unusual nickname of Slatts.⁸⁸ Additionally, former associates of Slattery interviewed for this report, recalled that she was the only Air Force nurse that had ever been known as Slatts.⁸⁹ Persons interviewed were Air Force nurses who retired in the 1960s, each with more than 20 years of service, including retired Air Force Col. Ethel Kovatch-Scott, who served as Chief Nurse of the Air Force from 1963 to 1965.

Upon review of Slattery's personnel file it was learned that she was only 5'3" tall and therefore was most likely not the 6'2" or 6'3" "tall skinny" nurse described.⁹⁰ This discrepancy in physical description and the fact that she did not arrive at Roswell AAF until nearly one month *after* Dennis claims he spoke to her, led to the conclusion that perhaps he confused Slattery with some other tall thin nurse, possibly named Wilson, who was stationed at the Roswell AAF or Walker AFB hospital at some other time.

Consequently, a comprehensive review of the morning reports and rosters of the Roswell AAF/Walker AFB hospital revealed that only one nurse named Wilson had ever served there and she did not arrive until February 1956.^{91*} Capt. Idabelle Miller, who became Maj. Idabelle Wilson in 1958 due to marriage and a promotion, was assigned to the Walker AFB hospital from February 1956 until May 1960.⁹²

Upon review of Maj. Wilson's personnel file, it was learned that she was 5'9" tall and thin. Also, she served as the Head Nurse of the surgical ward at the Walker AFB hospital.⁹³ Therefore, Wilson's physical attributes, tall and thin, and position as Head Nurse matched Dennis' recollections of "Captain Wilson." When contacted by Air Force researchers, Wilson stated she had no recollection of Dennis, of ever having conversations with him, any of the events he described, or of a nurse that was missing.⁹⁴ She also made it abundantly clear that as an Air Force officer and medical professional she would not spread a rumor of a plane crash, as Dennis alleged "Captain Wilson" did in conversations with him.⁹⁵

Results of Missing Nurse and Pediatrician Research

Examination of the missing nurse and the pediatrician stories, and other facts established by research, provide a foundation for further analysis to determine what actual event(s), if any, were responsible for these claims. Based on information developed, it appears this witness may be mistaken in

*Records were also searched for names similar to Wilson. Three nurses stationed at Roswell AAF/Walker AFB were identified; Martha Wasem, Carol Williams, and Chalma Walker. None of these nurses physical descriptions or personal/professional circumstances were similar to the descriptions of "Captain Wilson" described by the witness.

some of his statements, especially regarding the time frame of these events.

The following facts have been established:

- a. The only physician who ever relocated to Farmington, N.M., following his military service at Roswell AAF/Walker AFB was the former Chief of Pediatric Services at the Walker AFB hospital, the former Capt. Frank B. Nordstrom. Further, he did not arrive at Walker AFB until June 1951, four years *after* the purported Roswell Incident, has no recollection of Dennis, the statements Dennis attributes to him, or of any actual events that explain his account.
- b. The only nurse ever assigned to the Roswell AAF hospital (subsequently renamed Walker AFB) named Wilson, was Idabelle Wilson. She served at the Walker AFB hospital from 1956 until 1960 and had no recollection of ever meeting or speaking with Dennis or any of the activities he described.
- c. Captain Lucille C. Slattery, the only Air Force nurse ever known by the distinctive nickname "Slatts," *was* stationed at the Roswell AAF hospital. However, she did not arrive until August 7, 1947. This was one month *after* the Roswell Incident, making it improbable that Dennis spoke with her in early July 1947.
- d. There is no record that a nurse named Naomi Maria Selff, was ever assigned to Roswell AAF, Walker AFB, or was ever a member of the U.S. military.
- e. All nurses assigned to the Roswell AAF hospital in July 1947, have been accounted for, thereby eliminating any possibility that there was ever a missing nurse.

Since actual Air Force members who served at Roswell AAF/Walker AFB hospital were described in this account, the next step was to determine if actual events that occurred at the hospital were possibly the source of this story. As stated earlier in this report, a thorough examination of both classified and unclassified records from 1947 revealed no Army Air Forces or U.S. Air Force activities that explained the alleged events. Therefore records were reviewed from other time periods, based on personnel records of individuals believed to have been identified. These persons and the periods when they were assigned to Roswell AAF/Walker AFB are listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1
Persons Described and Periods of Service
at Roswell AAF/Walker AFB

Witness Description	Actual Individual Described	Period of Service at Roswell AAF/Walker AFB
the "missing" nurse	1st Lt. Eileen M. Fanton	Dec. 1946 - Sept. 1947
"Capt. 'Slatts' Wilson" (composite of two individuals)	Capt. Lucille C. Slattery	Aug. 1947 - Sept. 1950
	and Maj. Idabelle M. Wilson	Feb. 1956 - May 1960
"the pediatrician"	Capt. Frank B. Nordstrom	June 1951 - June 1953
"big redheaded colonel"	Col. Lee F. Ferrell	Oct. 1954 - June 1960

The Research Profile

With the establishment of a possible time frame, research efforts paralleled the previous examination in Section One of this report that determined high altitude balloons with anthropomorphic dummy payloads were responsible for the reports of aliens at the two rural New Mexico "crashed saucer" locations. A further review of Air Force activities was then made to determine if any were significantly similar to the information provided. Based on the time period established by personnel records and statements contained in the witness' own account, the following profile of possible events was established:

An event involving the Walker AFB hospital that took place between 1947 and 1960;

- a. that may have resulted in "very mangled," "black," "little bodies," that had a strong "odor" being placed in "body bags";
- b. that may have resulted in two persons not normally assigned to the hospital, believed to be doctors, that were "supposedly doing preliminary autopsies" on the "little bodies";
- c. that may have involved a body with a head that was much larger than normal which was transported to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio;
- d. that may have involved a redheaded captain or a big red-headed colonel;
- e. that may have resulted in an ambulance parked in the rear of the hospital containing wreckage with inscriptions, that were bluish-purplish which looked kind of like the bottom of a canoe; and,
- f. that may have required a heightened state of security.

2.2 Aircraft Accidents

The examination of events that involved the Walker AFB hospital that may explain reports of bodies was begun by reviewing the most prominent possible source, which were aircraft accident(s).^{*} A review of aircraft accidents from 1947 to 1960 revealed eight fatal accidents that involved Walker AFB.

Table 2.2
Fatal Aircraft Accidents by Year in the Vicinity of Walker AFB
1947-1960

Year	Aircraft Type	Location of Accident (distance from Walker AFB, N.M.)	Number of Fatalities
1947			
None			
1948			
8/12/48	B-29	4 miles South	13
1949			
5/16/49	C-47	6 miles Northeast	6
12/15/49	B-29	2 miles Northwest	7
1950			
6/1/50	KB-29	12 miles East/Southeast	3
1951			
None			
1952			
None			
1953			
None			
1954			
None			
1955			
6/16/55	T-33	On runway	2
10/3/55	B-47	34 miles West	2
1956			
6/26/56	KC-97	8.8 miles South	11
1957			
None			
1958			
None			
1959			
None			
1960			
2/3/60	KC-135	On runway and ramp	13

The following three basic criteria were used to narrow research efforts to specific accidents for more detailed examinations: were the victims burned, resulting in possible descriptions of "black" "little bodies"?; were the victims transported to the Walker AFB hospital?; and, were the victims

^{*} Other possible explanations such as automobile accidents, house fires, etc., were also examined. However, none of these were determined to be responsible for this account of bodies.

autopsied? To facilitate this examination, researchers reviewed official accident reports, organizational and base histories, individual personnel records of victims, and contemporary newspaper accounts of the accidents. Interviews of persons who participated in the aftermath of these accidents were also conducted. As a result, only one accident met the three criteria, the June 1956 KC-97 accident.

Table 2.3
Analysis of Air Force Aircraft Accidents
by Year in the Vicinity of Walker AFB
1947-1960

Date of Accident	Aircraft Type	Fatalities		
		Burned?	Taken to WAFB Hospital?	Autopsied?
8/12/48	B-29	Yes ⁹⁶	No ⁹⁷	No ⁹⁸
5/16/49	C-47	Yes ⁹⁹	No ¹⁰⁰	No ¹⁰¹
12/15/49	B-29	No ¹⁰²	Yes ¹⁰³	Yes ¹⁰⁴
6/1/50	KB-29	No ¹⁰⁵	No ¹⁰⁶	No ¹⁰⁷
6/16/55	T-33	Yes ¹⁰⁸	No ¹⁰⁹	Yes ¹¹⁰
10/3/55	B-47	Yes ¹¹¹	No ¹¹²	No ¹¹³
6/26/56	KC-97	Yes ¹¹⁴	Yes ¹¹⁵	Yes ¹¹⁶
2/3/60	KC-135	Yes ¹¹⁷	No ¹¹⁸	No ¹¹⁹

Upon detailed review of records of the 1956 accident and interviews with persons who participated in the recovery and identification of the victims, extensive similarities to the description the witness provided were apparent.

Fatal KC-97 Aircraft Mishap

In 1956, Walker AFB, N.M. was the home of Strategic Air Command's 6th and 509th Bombardment Wings.¹²⁰ Additionally, Walker was home of the 509th Aerial Refueling Squadron (509th ARS) equipped with the KC-97G aircraft.



Fig. 7. A KC-97 similar this of the 509th Aerial Refueling Squadron crashed 8.8 miles south of Walker AFB on June 26, 1956 with the loss of 11 lives. Descriptions of the aftermath of this tragedy are believed to be the basis for some of the reports of "bodies" at the Walker AFB hospital. (U.S. Air Force photo)

The accident occurred on June 26, 1956, 8.8 statute miles south of Walker AFB.¹²¹ A KC-97G aircraft with 11 crewmen on board, while on a refueling training mission, experienced a propeller failure four and one half minutes after takeoff.¹²² As a result of the propeller failure, a propeller blade was believed to have punctured the deck fuel tank of the fully loaded tanker causing an intense cabin fire.¹²³ The aircraft was quickly engulfed in flames, spun out of control, and was completely destroyed. All 11 Air Force members were killed instantly by the fire and impact explosion.¹²⁴ Due to the isolated rural impact location on property owned by the state of New Mexico, there was minimal collateral damage and no fatalities or injuries to persons on the ground.¹²⁵

The remains of the crewmen were recovered from the crash site and transported by members of the 4036th USAF Hospital (numerical designation of the hospital at Walker AFB) to the hospital facility at Walker AFB for identification.¹²⁶

On the day following the crash, an identification specialist from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio arrived at the hospital to assist in identifying the remains.¹²⁷ Part way through the identification process, conducted by both the identification specialist and Air Force members assigned to the Walker AFB hospital, the identification activities were moved to a refrigerated compartment at the Walker AFB commissary.¹²⁸ This was due to an overpowering odor emitted by the burned and fuel-soaked bodies and the lack of proper storage facilities at the small base hospital.¹²⁹ Also on the day following the crash, June 27, 1956, autopsies of three of the victims were accomplished by a local Roswell pathologist.¹³⁰ These examinations were performed at a local funeral home.¹³¹ Upon completion of the identification procedures and the post-mortem examinations, the remains were shipped to the next of kin for burial.



Fig. 8. Main entrance of the 4036th USAF hospital at Walker AFB, 1956. Initial identification procedures of the 11 aircrewmen killed in the June 26, 1956 KC-97 accident were conducted here before being transferred to another facility on the base with refrigeration capability. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Comparison of the Account to the KC-97 Mishap

This series of actual events contains extensive similarities to the account provided by Dennis. The numerous and extensive similarities indicate that some elements of this actual event were most probably included in Dennis' account. This aircraft accident provides an explanation for the following elements of the research profile—the very mangled, black, little bodies in body bags, the odor, the two strange doctors, and the report of a redheaded colonel.



Aircraft Crashes and UFOs

Since the first flying saucer story in June 1947, persons have attempted to exploit actual military aircraft accidents to support UFO theories and propagate the flying saucer phenomenon.

One of the first exploitation attempts involved a fatal August 1, 1947 Army Air Forces B-25 accident near Kelso, Wash. Descriptions of this accident, which UFO theorists contend was caused because the aircraft carried parts of a flying saucer, were included in a poorly executed hoax. Nonetheless, it received a considerable amount of attention.

Another incidence was photographs of an "alien," supposedly from a 1948 crash of a flying saucer in Mexico. However, when the photographs were examined by Air Force officials, they noticed a pair of government issue, aviator style, sunglasses lying underneath the "alien" body.

Perhaps the most famous attempt to exploit an actual aircraft accident involved the fatal January 1948 crash of a Kentucky Air National Guard F-51 fighter near Franklin, Ky. Theorists contend the fighter was shot down by a UFO. However, it was determined that this aircraft most probably crashed while observing a newly invented high altitude research balloon thought to be a UFO. The large balloon, which matched eyewitnesses' descriptions at the time, was released the previous day, and its ground track placed it precisely in the area where the unidentified object was sighted the next day. Regardless, shameless attempts to exploit this event continued as recently as 1995, when the tabloid TV program, *Sightings*, aired and published (*Sightings*, Simon & Schuster, 1996, 170-176) a distorted interpretation of this tragedy.



The "Black" "Little Bodies." Review of the autopsy protocols of the victims of this accident revealed extensive similarities to the descriptions of the bodies allegedly described by the missing nurse. Dennis related in various interviews that the missing nurse described, "...three; very mangled; black; little bodies in body bags."¹³² Records of this mishap confirmed that the victims suffered "injuries, extreme, multiple."¹³³ According to persons who assisted in the identification of the remains from this crash, and in compliance with Air Force directives in effect at that time, human remains pouches, commonly called body bags, were used to recover and transport victims' bodies.¹³⁴

Statements made by Dennis described bodies that were “three-and-a-half to four feet tall,” and “black” in color.¹³⁵ The autopsy protocols of two victims described extensive third degree burns and loss of the lower extremities.¹³⁶ Dennis also described a head of one of the bodies that was not rigid but “flexible” and tissues of a body in “strings” that looked as if they were “pulled” by predatory animals after the crash.¹³⁷ An autopsy protocol of a victim described “multiple fractures of all bones of the skull” and “partially cooked strands of bowel...over the abdomen and in the chest.”¹³⁸ Additional similarities between the autopsy protocols and Dennis’ statements were a detached hand and descriptions of the fingers and arms of the crash victims.¹³⁹

The autopsy protocol of one victim also described remains with a “face completely missing.”¹⁴⁰ This description corresponds with Dennis’ recollections of a body with eyes and nose that were concave. Also, the drawing of the head of one of the “little bodies” Dennis claims is representative of a drawing given to him by the missing nurse is a reasonably accurate representation of a human body with its face completely missing.¹⁴¹

Another similarity to Dennis’ account is that of the 11 victims of this accident, only three were autopsied—the same number of bodies that were allegedly autopsied in the missing nurse’s account.¹⁴² Finally, records revealed that due to limited facilities at the Walker AFB hospital, the autopsies were performed at the Ballard Funeral Home in Roswell.¹⁴³ This is the same funeral home where Dennis claimed to be employed in 1947 until 1962.^{144*}

The Odor. Transportation of remains to a small base hospital was unusual since the hospital did not have the necessary facilities— a preparation room, refrigeration equipment or a morgue, to accommodate multiple deceased persons. Records of other crashes involving Walker AFB showed that the remains of crash victims were transported either to another facility on Walker AFB or directly to a local funeral home.¹⁴⁵

Fig. 9. Three of the 11 Air Force members killed in the June 26, 1956 KC-97 accident were autopsied at the Ballard Funeral Home in Roswell. The actual descriptions of the remains (only three were autopsied), closely corresponds with Dennis’ descriptions regarding the “little bodies.” Additionally, this is the same funeral home where Dennis claimed to be employed from 1947 until 1962.



* It is unclear when Dennis worked at this funeral home since city and phone directories listed him as co-owning a different funeral home in Roswell, as vice-president of another funeral home in Roswell, and as having been employed as a drug store supervisor and oil field worker during the periods when he claims he worked at the Ballard Funeral Home.

In fact, the Air Force manual that prescribed the policies, standards and procedures relating to the care and disposition of deceased Air Force personnel in effect in 1956, Air Force Manual 143-1, *Mortuary Affairs*, did not direct that remains be brought to a hospital. It encouraged the local commander to "improvise facilities" and make use of "garages, warehouses, large tents, or other facilities for processing groups of remains."¹⁴⁶ Nonetheless, records of the June 1956 crash and interviews with the persons who processed the remains indicated that the victims were brought from the crash site to the Walker AFB hospital.¹⁴⁷ During the identification procedures, the odor became too strong and the bodies and the identification activities were moved to a refrigerated compartment at the base commissary.¹⁴⁸

Interviewed for this report were the registrar of the hospital, 1st Lt. Jack Whenry (now a retired Major) and a medical administration specialist assigned to the registrar, SSgt. John Walter (now a retired Master Sergeant), both of whom assisted in the processing and identification of the deceased aircrewmen. Whenry and Walter both recalled the strong odor, that some persons became ill during the procedures (as did the alleged missing nurse), and the unusual transfer of the remains to the Walker AFB commissary (the nurse also allegedly described the transfer of remains to another building on the base). However, neither recalled that a nurse was missing or any of the other activities as described by Dennis.¹⁴⁹

The "Big Redheaded Colonel." The big redheaded colonel is a likely reference to the hospital commander, Col. Lee F. Ferrell, who was 6'1" tall and had red hair. Ferrell served at the Walker AFB hospital from 1954 until 1960.¹⁵⁰ It would not be unusual for the hospital commander to be present at the hospital following a major aircraft accident.

The Two Mysterious "Doctors." The two doctors not assigned to the Walker AFB hospital who were allegedly observed at the hospital performing preliminary autopsies have been identified as an Air Force civilian identification specialist and a local Roswell pathologist.

Identification Specialist. In an aircraft mishap involving multiple fatalities, identification of victims can go beyond the capabilities of a small Air Force hospital such as the one at Walker AFB. Beginning in July 1951, the Air Force Memorial Affairs Branch, now called Air Force Mortuary Services, employed full-time civilian morticians and funeral directors, known as identification specialists, to assist Air Force installations in the identification of deceased persons.¹⁵¹ When requested by the local commander, the identification specialists, on a 24-hour standby basis, responded from Wright-Patterson AFB to the location of an incident.¹⁵² Records confirm that Walker AFB only requested an identification specialist on two occasions, in October 1955 and to identify the victims of the June 1956 crash.¹⁵³ For this accident the identification specialist arrived at Walker AFB on June 27, 1956 and made positive identifications of the 11 crewmen on June 28, 1956.¹⁵⁴

When contacted for this report, the retired identification specialist who responded to this accident, Mr. George Schwaderer, did not have any

recollections of Dennis, the nurse, the pediatrician, or any of the other unusual activities as alleged.¹⁵⁵ Schwaderer did recall that on identifications of group remains such as this, it was typical to wear standard hospital surgical gowns and masks and that he was often mistaken for a pathologist.¹⁵⁶

Due to restrictions on the release of information concerning the identification process, uninformed individuals who may, by chance, have witnessed some portions of the identification, were often the source of a considerable amount of speculation. The identification procedures employed by the identification specialists were not classified, but AFM-143-1, *Mortuary Affairs*, directed that "no information will be divulged concerning identification or shipment of any remains until a final determination of identity has been resolved for all remains."¹⁵⁷

For this accident, identification took approximately two days and any releases of information were restricted to individuals with an official requirement. These restrictions extended, not only to the general public, but also to Air Force members.

A possible reference to the identification specialist is found in one of Dennis' recitations of the account. Dennis, a mortician who might possess limited knowledge of Air Force mortuary procedures, stated that he was told the "doctors" might be pathologists from "Walter Reed Army Hospital."¹⁵⁸ Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C. is a likely location that an unknown pathologist performing an autopsy on military personnel might have been based. Co-located at Walter Reed is the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) and beginning in 1955, AFIP sent pathologists into the field to examine aircraft accidents. A review of records at AFIP and interviews with persons involved with the identification procedures at Walker AFB do not indicate AFIP sent any personnel to assist in this accident.¹⁵⁹

Pathology Consultant. In June 1956, the Walker AFB hospital did not have a pathologist on staff.¹⁶⁰ All autopsies and examinations of pathological specimens were conducted by a civilian consultant from Roswell.¹⁶¹ The autopsy protocols of the deceased crewmen from the June 1956 crash indicated that Dr. Alfred S. Blauw of Roswell performed the three autopsies.¹⁶² Obviously, neither the pathologist nor the identification specialist were normally assigned to the Walker AFB hospital and would not be expected to be present at the hospital, especially to an observer with limited knowledge of these activities.

Continuing Research

The focus of research was now shifted to other activities that might explain the remaining portions of the profile. The unexplained portions were:

- a. the presence of a redheaded captain;
- b. the wreckage in the rear of the ambulance outside the Walker AFB hospital;

- c. the heightened state of security at the Walker AFB hospital;
and,
- d. the shipment of a body with a large head to Wright-Patterson AFB.

Based on previous research, this effort began by examining records of the other Air Force aerial vehicle known to have operated extensively in the Roswell area since the late 1940s—high altitude research balloons.

2.3 High Altitude Research Projects

By 1960, hundreds of high altitude research balloons, some that carried anthropomorphic dummies, descended and were recovered in areas surrounding Walker AFB and Roswell. But based on the descriptions of the bodies and the involvement of a hospital and medical personnel, it did not seem likely that high altitude research balloons with scientific instruments or anthropomorphic dummies could possibly account for this testimony. Therefore, the focal point of the research shifted to manned high altitude balloon flights conducted by the Air Force during the mid to late 1950s and early 1960s.

Manned Balloon Flights

Two manned balloon projects, MAN HIGH and EXCELSIOR, were conducted within the time period targeted for research: MAN HIGH from 1957 to 1958¹⁶³ and the manned portion of EXCELSIOR in 1959 and 1960. The only other manned high altitude balloon project in Air Force history, STARGAZER, did not fly until 1962.

It was discovered that only six manned flights were made for MAN HIGH and EXCELSIOR. These flights were determined unlikely as the source of the testimony since there were no injuries or deaths, all six flights had been the subject of intense media coverage, and none were flown in the vicinity of Roswell. Despite the apparent dead end these flights presented to explain this account, records were obtained and persons involved in MAN HIGH and EXCELSIOR were contacted and interviewed. These records and interviews confirmed that there were, in fact, only six USAF manned high altitude



Fig. 10. Maj. David G. Simons (MC) (left), balloon designer Otto C. Winzen (center) and Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr., examine a scale model of a low altitude balloon gondola used to train pilots for high altitude missions. (photo courtesy of Mike Smith, Raven Industries)

balloon flights, none with characteristics similar to the testimony. However, detailed examinations of the records revealed that, in addition to the six high altitude balloon flights, there were also numerous low altitude balloon flights made to train and qualify the high altitude balloon pilots.¹⁶⁴ Records of the training flights indicated that some of these were conducted at Holloman AFB, N.M., and several mishaps occurred resulting in injuries to the pilots.¹⁶⁵

Further research revealed that one accident had taken place just northwest of Roswell.¹⁶⁶ The accident occurred on May 21, 1959, 10 miles northwest of Walker AFB, on a pilot training mission for the upcoming Project EXCELSIOR and STARGAZER flights scheduled to begin that fall. Analysis of the accident revealed actual events that closely resembled the remaining portions of the established profile.



U.S. Air Force Manned High Altitude Balloon Projects

In addition to unmanned high altitude balloon research flights, from 1957 to 1962 the U.S. Air Force conducted a series of seven manned high altitude flights. These forward-looking projects investigated the upper reaches of the earth's atmosphere and laid the foundation for manned spaceflight. Most flights were conducted before rocket booster technology was available to propel a spacecraft into earth's orbit. In this interim period, to "bridge the gap" while awaiting developments in rocket technology, high altitude balloons were the only vehicles capable of reaching the altitudes required. All three of the USAF manned high altitude balloon projects, MAN HIGH, EXCELSIOR, and STARGAZER utilized Holloman AFB balloons to transport men to the very edge of space, above approximately 99 per cent of the earth's atmosphere, a region known as "near space."

Project MAN HIGH. In 1955, a combined effort by the U.S. Air Force Aeromedical Field Laboratory, Winzen Research International, and the Holloman Balloon Branch resulted in the first Air Force manned balloon program. Project MAN HIGH, officially known as the Biodynamics of Space Flight, directed by Lt. Col. David Simons (MC), was the first of the three

Fig. 11. (Left) Test pilot Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. just before launch of MAN HIGH I at New Brighton, Minn. on June 2, 1957. Kittinger flew in all three USAF high altitude balloon projects and has accumulated more high altitude balloon flying hours than anyone else in the world. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Fig. 12. (Center) Lt. Col. David G. Simons (MC), a physician and pilot of the MAN HIGH II high altitude balloon mission, is shown here boarding the recovery helicopter near Frederick, S.D. following the successful flight on August 19, 1957. This flight lasted 33 hours and 10 minutes attaining a peak altitude of 101,500 feet. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Fig. 13. (Right) Holloman AFB Balloon Branch Meteorologist and Engineer, Bernard D. Gildenberg, instructs high altitude balloon pilot 1st Lt. Clifton McClure, pilot of MAN HIGH III, in the operation of a low altitude training balloon on May 12, 1959 at Holloman AFB, N.M. (U.S. Air Force photo)



widely publicized manned high altitude balloon programs. The objective of Project MAN HIGH was to measure the physiological and psychological capabilities of a human in a space equivalent environment. Many developments of this successful project were later incorporated into the first phase of the U.S. Air Force Man in Space Program nicknamed MAN IN SPACE SOONEST (MISS). Technology developed for MISS was transferred to NASA in 1959 and became part of Project MERCURY, the initial series of U.S. space missions.¹⁶⁷

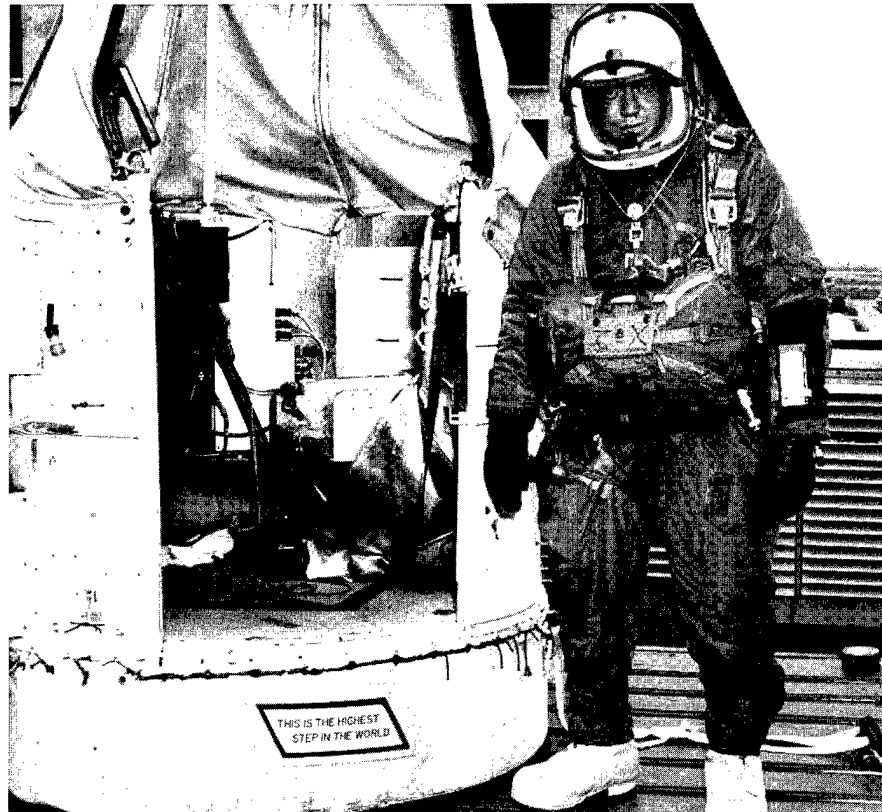


Fig. 14. Project officer and pilot, Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr., standing beside the EXCELSIOR gondola at Holloman AFB, N.M. On his third and final high altitude parachute jump, from 102,800 feet, he established world records for highest parachute jump and length of free-fall which still stand today. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Project EXCELSIOR. In 1959 and 1960 the U.S. Air Force Aero Medical Laboratory collaborated with the Holloman Balloon Branch for Project EXCELSIOR, the second Air Force manned high altitude balloon program. EXCELSIOR was the dramatic climax of the high altitude free-fall studies that began as Project HIGH DIVE in 1953 using anthropomorphic dummies. As the test director for Project EXCELSIOR, Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. made three parachute jumps from balloons, EXCELSIOR I, II, and III, from 76,000, 75,000, and a still standing record altitude of 102,800 feet. EXCELSIOR's scientific objective was to develop a parachute system and techniques required to return a pilot or astronaut to earth following an emergency high altitude escape.

Project STARGAZER. Project STARGAZER was the third Air Force manned high altitude balloon program. Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr., the veteran high altitude balloon pilot of MAN HIGH and EXCELSIOR, was both the pilot and project engineer. On December 13, 1962, Kittinger and U.S. Navy civilian astronomer William C. White rose to 86,000 feet to make astronomical observations with a gyro-stabilized telescope. A joint U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, Smithsonian Institution, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology program, STARGAZER made only one of a scheduled four flights due to budget shortfalls and equipment difficulties.



Fig. 15. Project STARGAZER pilot and project engineer, Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. (left), after landing near Lordsburg, N.M. on December 13, 1962 with U.S. Navy civilian astronomer William C. White. Kittinger and White ascended to 86,000 feet to make astronomical observations in the seventh, and final, U.S. Air Force manned high altitude balloon flight. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Table 2.4
U.S. Air Force Manned High Altitude Balloon Flights

Date	Project/Flight	Altitude (feet)	Pilot
6/2/57	MAN HIGH I	96,200	Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.
8/19/57	MAN HIGH II	101,500	Lt. Col. David G. Simons (MC)
10/8/58	MAN HIGH III	99,700	1st Lt. Clifton McClure
11/16/59	EXCELSIOR I	76,400	Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.
12/11/59	EXCELSIOR II	74,700	Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.
8/16/60	EXCELSIOR III	102,800	Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.
12/13/62	STARGAZER	86,000	Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.

With the completion of Project STARGAZER and the success of NASA's Project MERCURY space flights, future investigations were accomplished by space vehicles. This signaled the end of an era of manned high altitude balloon flight; however, these projects had indeed "bridged the gap," and manned space flight was now safely possible.



Low Altitude Balloon Training Missions

Background. In April 1958, Col. John P. Stapp, commander of the U.S. Air Force Aero Medical Laboratory at Wright-Patterson AFB, appointed a new project officer for Project EXCELSIOR, Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.. EXCELSIOR was part of an ongoing program to examine high altitude aircraft escape procedures and equipment.¹⁶⁸ Kittinger was an experienced fighter test pilot who was the pilot of the first Air Force manned high altitude balloon project, MAN HIGH I, in June 1957.¹⁶⁹ In addition to being the

EXCELSIOR project officer, Kittinger was the pilot and project engineer of STARGAZER which also utilized high altitude balloons.

By 1959, Kittinger was an integral part of both EXCELSIOR and STARGAZER and one of only three individuals in the Air Force with high altitude balloon pilot experience. Due to the hazardous nature of these important projects, Stapp was concerned that an injury to Kittinger might result in the cancellation of one or both of them. Therefore, Stapp determined there was a need for backup pilots. Selected as backup pilots were Captains Dan D. Fulgham and William C. Kaufman. Both men were rated aircraft pilots, parachutists, and research and development officers assigned to the Aero Medical Laboratory at Wright-Patterson AFB.

During the third week of May 1959, a series of low altitude manned balloon flights were flown to train Fulgham and Kaufman.¹⁷⁰ These flights were launched by the Holloman AFB Balloon Branch. To satisfy safety requirements, the flights were closely monitored by medical personnel at all times. A helicopter with medical personnel followed the flights during daylight hours, a C-131 aircraft followed during hours of darkness, and at all times medical personnel followed in an ambulance.¹⁷¹ Balloon recovery and communications technicians also followed the missions on the ground in a communications vehicle and a balloon recovery vehicle.¹⁷² The safety requirements were a result of several recent balloon mishaps that resulted in serious injuries to the pilots.

To meet the training schedule, Kittinger, Kaufman and Fulgham were assigned temporary duty (TDY) from the Aero Medical Laboratory at Wright-Patterson AFB to the Balloon Branch at Holloman AFB, N.M.

Fig. 16. In 1958 while training for the upcoming U.S. Air Force Aero Medical Laboratory high altitude MAN HIGH III balloon flight, balloon designer Otto C. Winzen (*right*) and space physiologist Capt. Grover Schock (*left*), were seriously injured in a balloon accident near Ashland, Wisc. Additionally, two training flights at Holloman AFB also resulted in injuries to pilots. These injuries prompted Air Force officials to require close medical supervision during future training flights. (photo courtesy of Mike Smith, Raven Industries)



The three pilots, Kittinger, Kaufman and Fulgham, flew training missions together. Kaufman and Fulgham alternately flew the balloon while Kittinger instructed. The missions were flown at night to take advantage of light winds and avoid the effects of diurnal heating on the helium (the lifting gas that filled the balloon). Used for these missions were 30-foot diameter polyethylene balloons and an aluminum gondola especially designed for low altitude training.

The first training mission scheduled for May 19, 1959 was canceled due to equipment problems.¹⁷³ Problems overcome, the next day at 1:30 a.m. the mission launched from White Sands Proving Ground.¹⁷⁴ The objective of this flight was to practice gas valving and ballasting techniques necessary for balloon control and to practice landings. After a five-hour flight, the balloon landed without incident just after sunrise northwest of El Paso, Texas.¹⁷⁵

The second training flight, launched at 2:41 a.m. on May 21, 1959, from behind the Balloon Branch building, Bldg. 850 at Holloman AFB.¹⁷⁶ Near the end of another successful training mission with the same objectives as the previous flight, a mishap occurred resulting in injuries to two of the pilots, Fulgham and Kittinger.¹⁷⁷



Fig. 17. In May 1959, Capt. Dan D. Fulgham (*left*) and Capt. William C. Kaufman, pilots and Aero Medical Research officers from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio were assigned temporary duty to Holloman AFB, N.M. to train as high altitude balloon pilots. Fulgham and Kaufman were trained by Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. (*photo collection of Dan D. Fulgham*)

The Mishap. Just after sunrise on May 21, 1959, following a successful low level training flight east of Holloman AFB over the Sacramento Mountains, Kittinger, the instructor pilot, determined the balloon should be landed in a small field approximately 10 miles northwest of Roswell.¹⁷⁸ This was necessary because of approaching bad weather and the field was the last suitable landing site before overflying the city of Roswell.¹⁷⁹ When the balloon touched down, a higher than normal forward velocity for landing caused the gondola to

overturn.¹⁸⁰ The three pilots, Kittinger, Fulgham, and Kaufman, were spilled from the gondola pinning Fulgham's head between the edge of the gondola and the ground.¹⁸¹ The impact shattered his helmet and he sustained a head injury.¹⁸² When the three pilots climbed out from under the gondola, Fulgham noticed that his "head seemed to be protruding outward from underneath [his] helmet."¹⁸³ Kittinger also received an injury, a minor facial laceration. The crew of the nearby chase helicopter and personnel in the ground tracking vehicles rushed to the scene.¹⁸⁴ For medical treatment, the pilots were transported by the helicopter to nearby Walker AFB.¹⁸⁵

When the helicopter landed at Walker AFB, it was met by armed security personnel who sought to verify the purpose of the unannounced arrival.¹⁸⁶ The security personnel escorted the balloon pilots to the hospital.¹⁸⁷ The balloon recovery and communications crew, after retrieving the gondola and balloon, drove to Walker AFB to check on the injured crew and to inform the Balloon Branch at Holloman AFB of the accident.¹⁸⁸

At the Walker AFB hospital, Fulgham and Kittinger received treatment for their injuries and neither required admission. Meanwhile, the Walker AFB security officials continued to escort the unannounced visitors while verifying their identities.¹⁸⁹ The pilot's identities and purpose for their visit were confirmed via phone by Colonel Stapp, Aero Medical Laboratory commander at Wright-Patterson AFB (the pilots and Project EXCELSIOR were assigned to this organization).¹⁹⁰

Kittinger, the EXCELSIOR project officer, wanted to leave the hospital as quickly as possible after he and Fulgham received medical attention.¹⁹¹ The quick departure was to avoid unwanted scrutiny by Walker AFB flying safety officials.¹⁹² When released by the flight surgeon, the three pilots boarded the chase helicopter and returned to Holloman AFB approximately 100 miles to the west.

Fig. 18. The balloon training missions flown from Holloman AFB, N.M. in May 1959, were made in an open gondola suspended beneath a 30-foot diameter polyethylene balloon. This photo was taken on May 21, 1959 by Balloon Branch communications technician, A2C Ole Jorgeson just prior to the mishap which resulted in injuries to two of the pilots. (photo collection of Ole Jorgeson)



2.4

Comparison of the Hospital Account to the Balloon Mishap

The balloon mishap near Roswell on May 21, 1959 provides the probable explanation for some of the remaining elements of the incident profile—the redheaded captain, the unusual security at the hospital, the wreckage in the rear of an ambulance, and one portion of the accounts of “aliens” at the Roswell AAF hospital.

The “Redheaded Captain”

It is highly probable that the descriptions of a redheaded captain are those of Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr., now a retired Colonel. Kittinger, who has red hair, was present at the Walker AFB hospital the entire time the events involving the balloon mishap took place. This is the second Roswell account that describes a captain with red hair. As related in Section One of this report (see page 77 and Appendix C, page 194), a redheaded captain was also allegedly present at the “crashed saucer” site on the San Agustin Plains.¹⁹³ That account was consistent with Kittinger’s responsibilities as the EXCELSIOR and STARGAZER pilot and project officer. As project officer of two research programs that utilized high altitude balloons and as a chase pilot on many other high altitude balloon missions, Kittinger often accompanied balloon launch and recovery crews. He was present both on the ground and in the air at balloon launch and recovery locations throughout New Mexico and the Southwest United States to launch and retrieve anthropomorphic dummies used for Project EXCELSIOR and unmanned test gondolas used for Project STARGAZER.¹⁹⁴

Following the accident, when the balloon pilots were transported to the Walker AFB hospital for medical treatment, Kittinger wanted to leave as soon as possible.¹⁹⁵ He recalled in a recent interview that his desire to quickly leave Walker AFB was to avoid the initiation of a formal accident investigation. He believed that an accident investigation might bring unwanted scrutiny to Project EXCELSIOR and delay or even cancel the controversial project.¹⁹⁶ The controversy surrounding Project EXCELSIOR was due principally to the hazardous nature of the high altitude escape research. Some senior research and development officials within the Air Force were reluctant to support a project that required a human subject to parachute from a balloon gondola at over 100,000 feet. An accident investigation at this juncture would most likely delay the human high altitude free-fall tests scheduled for the fall of 1959 and may have resulted in cancellation of the project.¹⁹⁷

While at the hospital, Kittinger consulted by phone with his commander, Colonel Stapp.¹⁹⁸ Stapp agreed with Kittinger’s assessment that a quick departure from the Walker AFB hospital, after receiving appropriate medical attention, was in the best interest of the project.¹⁹⁹

The statements attributed to the redheaded captain, "You did not see anything. There was no crash here. You don't go into town making any rumors that you saw anything or that there was any crash,"²⁰⁰ were consistent with Kittinger's desire to avoid an accident investigation. However, when interviewed for this report, neither Kittinger nor any of the other persons documented as having been present in the hospital that day recalled encountering Dennis.²⁰¹

What may have led an uninformed person, such as Dennis, to believe they were witnessing, or were told of, an unusual or classified event, was that when the injured balloon pilots arrived at the Walker AFB hospital, even though Project EXCELSIOR was unclassified, Kittinger sought to limit disclosure of negative information and publicity.²⁰²

By 1959, having been the subject of intense media scrutiny following his June 1957 MAN HIGH I high altitude balloon flight, Kittinger was aware of both the positive and negative aspects of publicity. In his 1961 book, *The Long, Lonely Leap*, Kittinger described this self-imposed secrecy regarding Project EXCELSIOR, "The secrecy imposed upon EXCELSIOR was of our own choosing. We believed...that any unnecessary conversation about our activities...would simply be premature."²⁰³ When interviewed for this report, Kittinger further explained of Project EXCELSIOR and the visit to the hospital at Walker AFB: "We didn't want publicity... about anything we were doing. So it would have appeared to someone not conversant with the project that we were 'hush-hush,' that we were secretive... it might look like we were trying to cover up a classified mission."²⁰⁴

The allegations that the redheaded captain, an apparent reference to Kittinger, threatened anyone while he was at the Walker AFB hospital are untrue. When interviewed for this report and in signed statements obtained from Kittinger, the two other balloon pilots, the doctor who treated them, the medic aboard the helicopter, and the Balloon Branch communications technician who were present at the hospital that day (see Appendix B), none of them recalled that Kittinger was involved in an altercation or made threatening remarks to anyone.²⁰⁵ Involvement in an altercation with a civilian would have highlighted the presence of the balloon crew and possibly brought the type of negative publicity Kittinger sought to avoid. This would not only have violated Kittinger's policy of maintaining a low profile in regard to EXCELSIOR, but would be completely out of character for the seasoned test pilot.

Throughout his career, Kittinger was renowned for his ability to maintain his composure in difficult, often life threatening, situations. He faced these situations as a test pilot, as a combat pilot and squadron commander in Southeast Asia, and as a Prisoner of War while subjected to severe torture at the hands of the North Vietnamese. In *The Pre-Astronauts*, which chronicles many of Kittinger's accomplishments in the field of aeronautics, including Project EXCELSIOR and STARGAZER, the author offered the following description of him:

Kittinger was not Buck Rogers, nor was he a daredevil or thrill-seeker. He was a modern day test pilot: intense, focused, usually quiet, and always polite with firm religious convictions and a powerful sense of loyalty. If he was often stubborn, uncompromising, and demanding he also dealt fairly and respectfully with those who came into contact with him. He was a straight arrow and a straight shooter. ²⁰⁶



Fig. 19. Maj. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. in 1963 as a member of the 1st Air Commando Wing, Ben Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Colonel Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr., USAF (Ret)

Colonel Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.'s career in the U.S. Air Force and in aviation has spanned the spectrum of experiences: test pilot, balloon pilot, test parachutist, combat fighter pilot, MiG killer, combat squadron commander, and prisoner of war. He has demonstrated, during a nearly 30-year military career and beyond, that he is among the very best in the U.S. Air Force and the field of aeronautics.

Kittinger began his career in 1949 as a U.S. Air Force aviation cadet. After earning his wings at Las Vegas AFB, Nev. in March 1950, he was assigned to fighter squadrons in Germany and then as a test pilot for NATO. In 1953, Kittinger received an assignment as a test pilot to Holloman AFB, N.M. While at Holloman, he began a many year collaboration with the legendary Air Force scientist and physician, Col. John P. Stapp. In association with Stapp on numerous aero medical projects, Kittinger became the first pilot to fly zero-gravity experiments, now commonly used for astronaut training. For project MAN HIGH on June 2, 1957, Kittinger piloted a high altitude balloon to 96,000 feet to examine the physiological and psychological effects on man in a space equivalent environment. This flight marked the origins of the manned U.S. space program with the experience gained from MAN HIGH being incorporated in NASA's Project MERCURY.

After MAN HIGH, and again in association with Stapp, Kittinger directed Project EXCELSIOR, a study of human free-fall characteristics following aircraft escape at extremely high altitudes. After extensive testing with anthropomorphic dummies, Kittinger made three parachute jumps from high altitude balloons: 76,400 feet on November 16, 1959; 74,700 feet on December 11, 1959; and 102,800 feet on August 16, 1960. For these courageous scientific achievements Kittinger was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Harmon Trophy by President Eisenhower, the still-standing world records for highest parachute jump and length of a free-fall—and the distinction of being the only living person to exceed the speed of sound without an aircraft or spacecraft!

With the completion of EXCELSIOR, Kittinger became the pilot, project officer, and project engineer for STARGAZER, an astronomical observation experiment. This was the third and final Air Force manned high altitude balloon project, Kittinger had flown in all three.

In 1963, he was assigned to the Air Commandos (now Special Operations) and flew two combat tours in Southeast Asia in B-26 and A-26 aircraft. After a tour in Germany as a liaison officer with the U.S. Army Special Forces, Kittinger returned to Southeast Asia in 1971, flying F-4 aircraft and commanding the famous 555th "Triple Nickel" Tactical Fighter Squadron at Udorn AB, Thailand. On March 1, 1972 Kittinger engaged and destroyed a MiG-21 over North Vietnam and is credited with an aerial victory. On May 11, 1972, after 483 combat missions and more than 1,000 combat flying hours, Kittinger was shot down over Hanoi and spent 11 months as a POW in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton." When placed with other POWs following solitary confinement and severe torture, Kittinger was moved repeatedly by his North Vietnamese captors due to his effectiveness in motivating other prisoners to maintain strong resistance postures.

Kittinger retired from the Air Force in 1978 and became involved in both sport aircraft flying and gas ballooning. He operated Rosie O' Grady's Flying Circus in his hometown of Orlando, Fla., performing skywriting, banner towing, and hot air and helium balloon demonstrations at nearby Walt Disney World. He also captured the coveted Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Championship an unprecedented four times (three consecutive), entitling him to retire the trophy.

In September 1984, Kittinger made history again, when, in the tradition of Lindbergh, he became the first person to make a solo crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by balloon.

Kittinger's military decorations include the Silver Star with one oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross with five oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star Medal with "V" device and two oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with 23 oak leaf clusters, Purple Heart with one oak leaf cluster, POW medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Kittinger's indomitable spirit, personal courage and dedication to duty are legendary. His ability to achieve seemingly unattainable objectives while earning the respect and absolute loyalty of those who served with him defines this rare breed of warrior-leader.

In October 1995, he received yet another honor and was named a recipient of the prestigious "Elder Statesman of Aviation" award by the National Aeronautics Association. This honor is bestowed upon an individual who over a period of years, has made "significant contributions to aeronautics" and for "reflecting credit upon himself and America." Without a doubt, there are few that exemplify these virtues more than this truly distinctive American, Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.



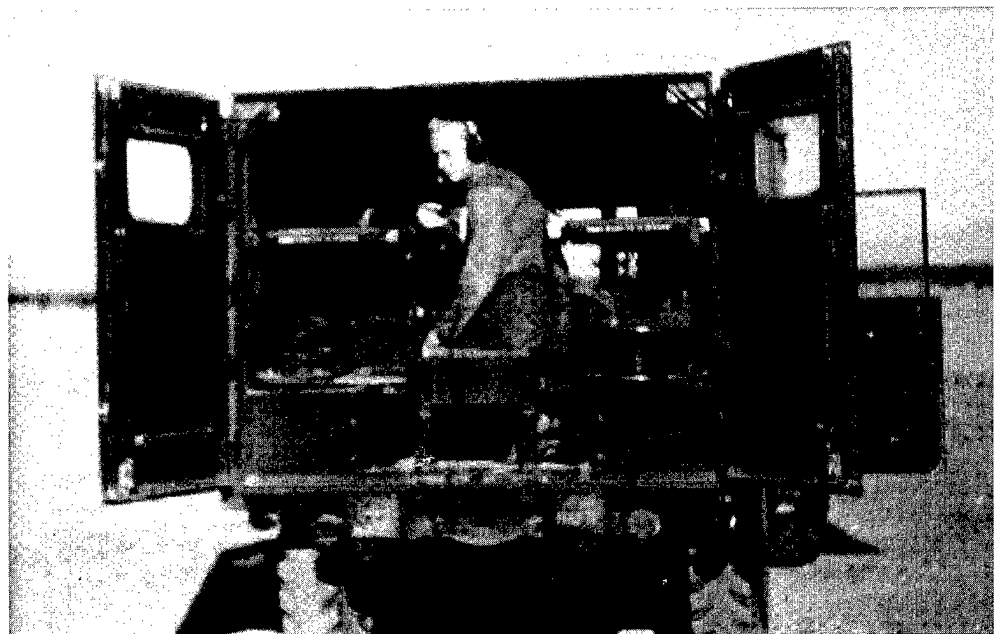
The “Wreckage” in the Rear of the Ambulance

The various types of wreckage described in the rear of an ambulance at the Walker AFB hospital also appear to be related to the 1959 balloon accident. Some of this wreckage allegedly had odd inscriptions, touted by UFO theorists as “alien” hieroglyphics.

A requirement of balloon pilot training missions were that they be closely monitored by balloon recovery and medical personnel.²⁰⁷ Ground crews from Holloman AFB followed the balloon flight from its launch site there to its landing site 10 miles northwest of Roswell.²⁰⁸ Two of the vehicles that followed the balloon were Dodge M-43 3/4-ton field ambulances and a third was an M-37 3/4-ton utility vehicle or “weapons carrier.”²⁰⁹ One ambulance was assigned to this mission for its standard use—a medical response vehicle. The other ambulance had been converted by the Holloman AFB Balloon Branch and served as a communications vehicle on balloon recovery missions.²¹⁰ The additional communications equipment, mounted in the rear compartment of the ambulance, drastically altered what someone expected to see in an ambulance of this type.

Dennis related that he was walking fast when he observed what he thought was wreckage in the rear of an ambulance.²¹¹ This quick glance apparently resulted in descriptions of two pieces of wreckage leaning against the interior of the rear compartment of the ambulance that “was kind of like the bottom of a canoe...like stainless steel...with kind of a bluish-purplish tinge to it.”²¹² UFO theorists have suggested that these objects were alien spaceship “escape pods” recovered by the Army Air Forces. However, this appears to be a remarkably accurate description of two steel panels painted Air Force blue on a converted ambulance used by the Balloon Branch for this mission.

Fig. 20. Balloon Branch Communications Technician, A2C Ole Jorgeson, now a retired Master Sergeant, in the rear compartment of an M-43 ambulance. Ambulances of this type were converted by the Balloon Branch to communications vehicles in the late 1950s. It appears the witness described the two panels painted Air Force blue (*lower right and left of ambulance*) as “bluish-purplish” “wreckage” that looked “kinda like the bottom of a canoe” and the stenciled writing above them as “hieroglyphics”—See figs. 21 and 22 on next page. (*photo collection of Ole Jorgeson*)



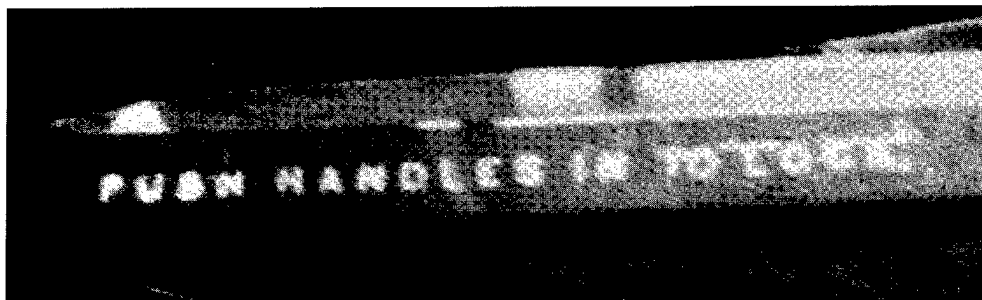


Fig. 21. (Above) Enlargement of stenciled writing from photograph below. This lettering was apparently later described as "hieroglyphics."

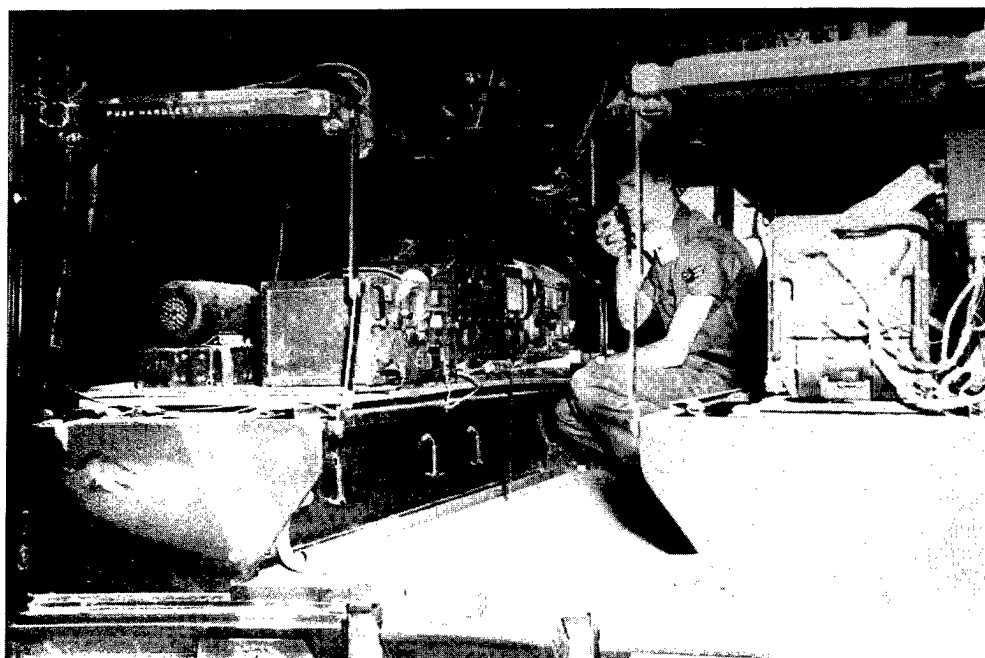


Fig. 22. (Below) Steel panels painted Air Force blue (lower right and left) described as "bluish-purplish" "wreckage" that looked "kinda like the bottom of a canoe." (U.S. Air Force photo)

The "inscription or something,"²¹³ the so called "hieroglyphics," were a probable reference to the lettering painted on the equipment support rack above the panels. The lettering on the rack would be visible, but probably not readable, to an observer that quickly walked past the ambulance. Other wreckage "all over the floor" that was "like broken glass,"²¹⁴ was a probable reference to the clear plastic 30-foot polyethylene balloon that was recovered following the balloon training mission and placed in the back of the converted ambulance or the weapons carrier for later disposal.

Dennis also recalled that he parked the vehicle he was driving near three field ambulances and then walked up the ramp into the hospital.²¹⁵ The description of ambulances near a "ramp" is consistent with the recollections of the Balloon Branch Communication Technician who drove the converted ambulance to the Walker AFB hospital following the balloon accident. While waiting for the injured pilots, A2C Ole Jorgeson, now a retired Master Sergeant, recalled in a recent interview that he parked the converted ambulance near a ramp at the hospital.²¹⁶ A review of Walker AFB hospital records revealed that there was only one ramp. The ramp was attached to the hospital dispensary, Walker AFB Bldg. 317.²¹⁷ The other ambulances described by the witness were either the other ambulance from Holloman

AFB that provided medical support of the balloon flight or the two “standby” ambulances, that in May 1959, were routinely positioned adjacent to the ramp behind the dispensary at Walker AFB.²¹⁸

Fig. 23. “It was all sharp... like broken glass,” a witness’ description of debris in the rear of an ambulance at Walker AFB. The debris described was most probably the remnants of the polyethylene balloon, similar to the one in this photo, recovered by Balloon Branch personnel following the mishap in May 1959.

(U.S. Air Force photo)



Additional Security at the Walker AFB Hospital

The witness described what appeared to be a heightened state of security at the hospital when he allegedly took the injured airman there for treatment. UFO theorists contend the heightened security at the hospital was because alien remains were being autopsied. However, it appears that the witness described the security measures taken by Walker AFB personnel due to the unusual circumstances of the arrival of the balloon crew.

In 1959, Walker AFB was a part of the 47th Air Division of Strategic Air Command (SAC). It was home of the 6th Bombardment Wing (6th BW), equipped with the nuclear capable B-52 Stratofortress bomber (the 509th BW was reassigned to Pease AFB, NH on July 1, 1958).²¹⁹ The mission of the 6th BW, to strike the enemy with nuclear weapons anywhere in the world at a moment’s notice, demanded a heightened state of security at all times. One of the methods instituted during this period to maintain the high standards of security and effectiveness of SAC units, was unannounced “surprise” visits of Headquarters SAC inspection teams. A favored method of transportation for these surprise visits was a helicopter. When a SAC inspection team landed at a base, often the first evaluation they made was of the security response to their unannounced arrival. Failure of security personnel to properly challenge unidentified visitors, regardless of their method of arrival, was considered a serious breach of security.

When transported to Walker AFB for medical treatment, unexpected and at an early hour, the balloon crew, not surprisingly, was met by armed

security personnel.²²⁰ The security personnel escorted them to the hospital and remained with them until their identities and purpose of their visit were verified. Kaufman, one of the balloon pilots, recalled that their presence at Walker AFB was initially met with skepticism.

“The [helicopter] pilot called the tower and said... having come from an experimental base, it was nothing unusual for him to have a balloon accident. ‘We’ve got an injured pilot on board. There’s been a balloon accident and we would like the flight surgeon and an ambulance to meet us at the tower.’ The tower established the fact that yes, we were an Air Force chopper and that we seemed to have somebody injured and what had we been doing? We had been shooting touch and go landings in a balloon?...We got clearance to land...right in front of the tower, and we were met by an ambulance and several MPs with machine guns.”²²¹

Fig. 24. Walker AFB Building 317, hospital dispensary with attached ramp, as it appeared in June 1954. It is in this building that UFO theorists allege that “alien autopsies” were accomplished in July 1947. However, this was the same building that Capt. Fulgham received treatment following the balloon accident on May 21, 1959. Persons apparently observed him and later related the unusual circumstances surrounding the balloon mishap as part of the “Roswell Incident.” (U.S. Air Force photo)

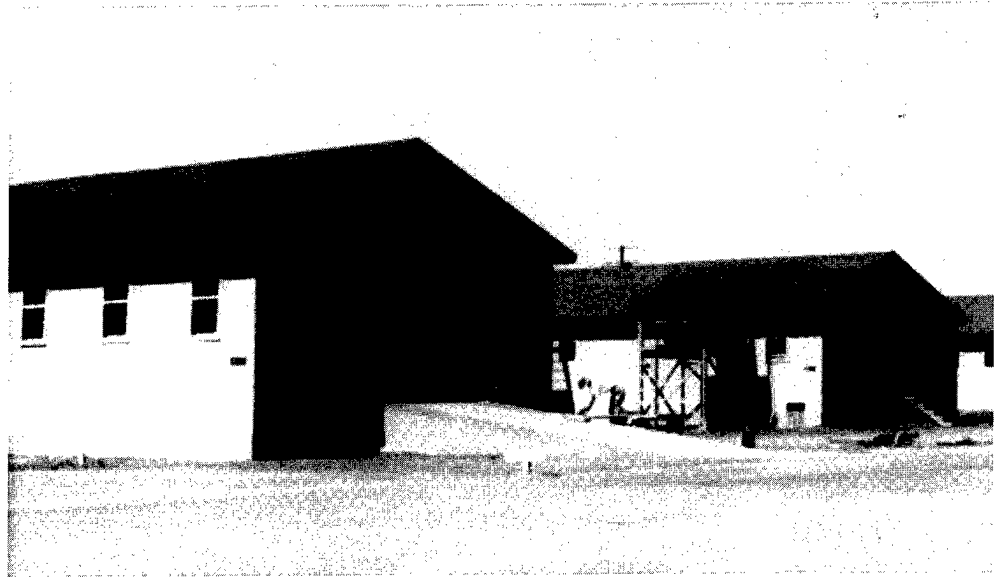


Fig. 25. Main gate at Walker AFB, N.M., formerly Roswell AAF, as it appeared in 1954. During the 1950s, the highly secure base was the home of the nuclear capable 509th and 6th Bombardment Wings of Strategic Air Command. (U.S. Air Force photo)



According to the medical technician who arrived on the helicopter with the pilots, he had difficulty persuading a flight surgeon to attend to the injured pilots. SSgt. Roland H. "Hap" Lutz, now a retired Chief Master Sergeant, recalled when he first contacted the Walker AFB hospital explaining that he had three persons injured in a "gondola accident," the flight surgeon told him to "Go home and sleep it off."²²² Fulgham, the injured pilot, recalled that when they got to the hospital, "there was this controversy going on in the hospital about who in the hell we were...we weren't supposed to be there and nobody knew anything about Air Force officers flying balloons...we could have been...[trying] to penetrate the security."²²³ Walker AFB security officials were satisfied of the pilots' identities when they spoke to Colonel Stapp, commander of the Aero Medical Laboratory at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

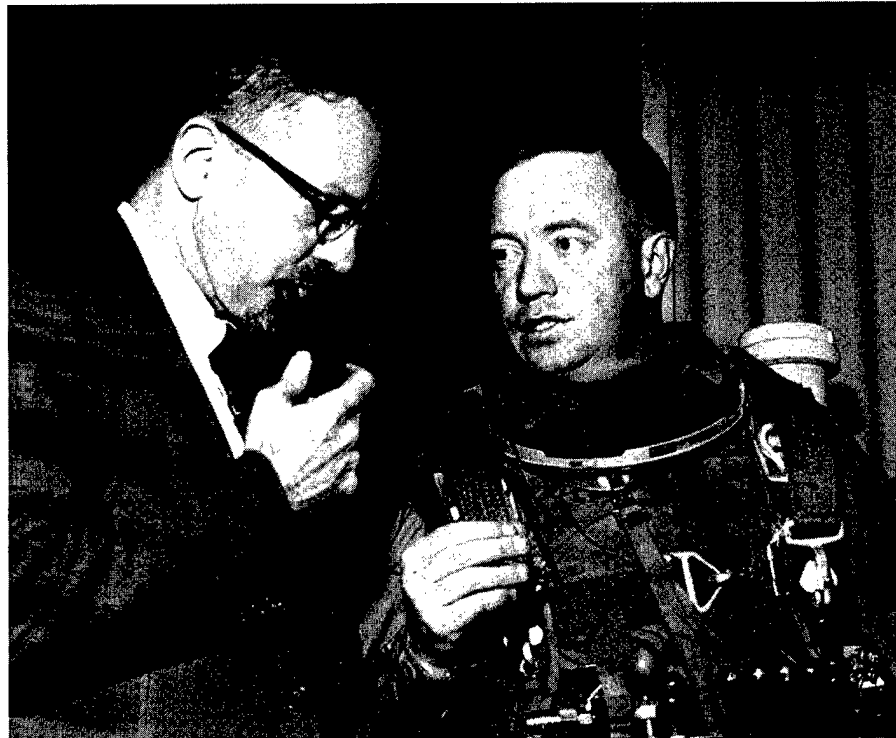


Fig. 26. Capt. Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr. (*right*), is shown here in 1962 with Dr. J. Allen Hynek while preparing for the project STARGAZER high altitude balloon flight. (*U.S. Air Force photo*)

The "Red-headed Captain" and Dr. J. Allen Hynek

Captain Kittinger, the STARGAZER high altitude balloon pilot and project engineer, had extensive professional contact with Dr. J. Allen Hynek, an astronomer and STARGAZER project scientist. Additionally, Hynek was also one of the scientific consultants in the Air Force study of UFOs, Project BLUEBOOK. Hynek is best known, however, for his apparent endorsement of extraterrestrial theories concerning UFOs after concluding his associations with the Air Force.

When asked about his recollections of Hynek, Kittinger stated that when they were associated, from 1958 to 1963, they discussed UFOs at length.²²⁴

At that time, Hynek was steadfast in his opinion that most, if not all, UFO sightings could be resolved by applying known scientific analysis.²²⁵ Kittinger said he was “flabbergasted” when, years later, Hynek appeared to reverse his opinion and endorse extraterrestrial explanations.²²⁶ Hynek’s reversal in philosophies led to numerous commercial endeavors, most notably as a technical advisor for the science-fiction film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Also, based on his experience with project STARGAZER, Hynek was familiar with balloon operations at Holloman AFB, visiting the Holloman Balloon Branch several times.²²⁷ Interestingly, there is no record that Hynek, who died in 1986, ever endorsed what is now presented as the “best evidence” of UFOs, the so-called Roswell Incident, which was actually a conglomeration of numerous events, some with origins in Holloman AFB launched balloons.



The Alien at the Hospital

In at least one account of the Roswell Incident, a witness claimed he observed a “creature” walk under its own power into the hospital.²²⁸ While the specifics of this particular sighting cannot be verified, the injury that caused Fulgham’s head to swell, resembling the classic science-fiction alien head, makes this account (and some others) that at first appeared to be the work of over-active imaginations, seem possible.

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Fig. 27. Clinical Record Cover Sheet from medical records of Capt. Dan D. Fulgham describing injuries he received in the balloon accident on May 21, 1959.

When the balloon gondola struck Fulgham's head, he received, according to his clinical record from May 21, 1959, an "Extensive hematoma forehead and ant [anterior] scalp."²²⁹ A hematoma is a localized blood-filled swelling, that in this instance was on the forehead. The hematoma resulted in immediate facial swelling, two black eyes and later caused his skin to turn yellow.²³⁰

The rapid onset of the swelling caused both of Fulgham's eyes to close. As it progressed, according to Kittinger who accompanied Fulgham at the hospital, "His whole face had swollen up and his nose barely protruded."²³¹ This appearance lead Kittinger to characterize Fulgham's appearance at the time as "just a big blob" and "grotesque."²³²

When interviewed, Fulgham remembered that even though he didn't feel bad, "I didn't know how bad I looked." There was no attempt to hide or limit Fulgham's exposure to persons in the hospital that day. In fact, when he arrived at the hospital Fulgham recalled that he stopped outside the building to smoke a cigarette. Kaufman also recalled that the injured pilots, Fulgham and Kittinger, waited for treatment on a bench in the hallway of the hospital. Kaufman added that a number of military wives were present in the hospital that day for prenatal care, and there was no effort to keep Fulgham from their view.²³³



Fig 28. Capt. Dan D. Fulgham at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio several days after the balloon accident with a "traumatic hematoma" on his forehead. This photo shows Fulgham after blood had been aspirated from under his scalp and a substantial amount of swelling had dissipated. Concerns that Fulgham's odd appearance might startle uninformed persons was why he was returned to Wright-Patterson AFB aboard a specially arranged flight from Holloman AFB, N.M. (photo collection of Dan D. Fulgham)

“Bodies” with Large Heads and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

UFO theorists contend that the U.S. Army Air Forces secretly shipped the alien bodies with large heads to Wright-Patterson AFB for further processing and deep-freeze storage. However, it is likely that, in this account, this is a reference to Fulgham's return to Wright-Patterson AFB following the balloon mishap.

Although Fulgham did not require hospitalization at Walker AFB, upon his return to Holloman AFB he was admitted to the base hospital for observation. Three days later on May 24, 1959, the balloon pilots were flown from Holloman to Wright-Patterson AFB on a specially arranged flight aboard a C-131 hospital aircraft.²³⁴

The return to Wright-Patterson AFB was directed by Stapp and coordinated by Kittinger.²³⁵ The preliminary arrangements for this flight were made by Kittinger while at the Walker AFB hospital.²³⁶ Kittinger recalled that conversations with Stapp regarding their return to Wright-Patterson AFB were made by phone in busy areas of the hospital and these conversations could have been overheard by nearly anyone present.²³⁷

Upon their arrival at Wright-Patterson, Fulgham, who Kittinger did not want to transport on a commercial flight due to his odd appearance, still could not open his eyes and had to be led down the steps of the aircraft. Kittinger recalled that Fulgham's wife was waiting at the bottom of the aircraft steps when they arrived.

“They dropped the ramp and I looked down at the bottom and there was Dan Fulgham's wife,” Kittinger said. “Dan couldn't see...so I grabbed him by the arm...Dan's wife sees me leading this blob down the staircase... and she looks right at me and says, ‘Where's my husband?’ I said, ‘Ma'am, this is your husband’. I presented her this blob that I was leading down the ramp. And she let out this scream you could hear a mile away. He was such a horrendous looking thing that she had no idea that the thing I was leading down that ramp was her husband.”²³⁸



Fig. 29. As a physiologist for the space program, Fulgham (third from left) discusses Project GEMINI emergency escape systems at the U.S. Navy Aerospace Recovery facility at El Centro, Calif. on January 28, 1965. Shown with Fulgham (from left) are NASA astronaut Jim Lovell, NASA project engineer Hilary Ray, and NASA astronaut Alan Bean. (U.S. Navy photo)

Fig. 30. A veteran of 100 combat missions during the Korean conflict, Fulgham flew 133 combat missions in F-4 aircraft (shown here) in 1966-67 as a member of the 555th "Triple Nickel" Tactical Fighter Squadron at Ubon Air Base, Thailand. (photo collection of Dan D. Fulgham)



Fulgham recalled that upon his return to work at the Aero Medical Laboratory he received reactions of "immediate compassionate sympathy" from persons he encountered, including his secretary, who cried when she saw him.²³⁹ Within several weeks, Fulgham returned to flying status with no permanent effects. Fulgham went on to complete a distinguished career in the Air Force and retired as a colonel in 1978. Fulgham's assignments included combat tours in fighter aircraft in both Korea and Vietnam, as well as an assignment as an experimental parachutist and physiologist for the space program.

Summary

In this section, documented research revealed that the reports of "bodies" at the Roswell AAF hospital were grossly inaccurate and most probably had origins in actual Air Force mishaps. Examinations of official records of the alleged primary witnesses revealed that the "missing nurse" was never missing, and the pediatrician did not arrive at the Walker AFB hospital until 1951—four years *after* the alleged incident. The many fundamental errors in the story, combined with the substantial similarities to the actual mishaps, show that the most credible account associated with the "Roswell Incident" is certainly not extraterrestrial and is unrelated to any events that occurred in July 1947.